

*Note on Major Francklin's Manuscript description of Gaur.*—By  
H. BEVERIDGE, I. C. S., (Retd.)

(Read February, 1894.)

The existence of this manuscript seems to have been first brought to notice by Mr. Grote, who recommended Mrs. Ravenshaw to use it in editing her husband's work on Gaur. Afterwards, Mr. Grote took upon himself the task of annotation, and added many notes from Francklin to Ravenshaw's text.

A few years ago, our Society applied to the India Office for the manuscript, with the view of printing it, if this should seem worth while. The Secretary for India referred the matter to Dr. Burgess, who gave it as his opinion that all the valuable information in Francklin's report had been extracted by Mr. Grote. In consequence of this, the manuscript was not sent to our Society.

Since then, I have examined the report, and compared it with Ravenshaw's Gaur, and I have found that Dr. Burgess's opinion was correct. All, or nearly all, that is of value in the report has been put into Mr. Grote's notes. I therefore cannot recommend that the report should be published, though it does seem hard that a paper submitted to the Court of Directors, so long ago as April 1812, should have been neglected till 1878, and then be superseded by the pith of it being put into another book. Had it been used at the time, the map and drawings which accompanied the journal might have been preserved. In his letter to the Court of Directors, dated Bhāgalpur, 12 April 1812, Francklin speaks of forwarding a journal, map, drawings, &c., and in the journal there are frequent references to drawings by their numbers. The journal is in the Map-room of the Registry and Record Department of the India Office, but the map<sup>1</sup> and drawings have disappeared, and

<sup>1</sup> The loss of the map is of small moment, for Francklin mentions that he procured it from Mr. Ellerton, and that it was constructed by Creighton. It must, therefore, have been the same as that published in Creighton's Gaur.

Mr. Grote's letter to Mrs. Ravenshaw shows that they were not forthcoming about twenty years ago.

William Francklin was, like Warren Hastings and Impey, a Westminster boy, and was an officer in the Army of the East India Company. He was the son of a clergyman named Thomas Francklin, who was a man of some note in the literary world, but who unhappily got confounded with his more celebrated namesake, Benjamin Franklin. Macaulay corrects the mistake, and then impales his unoffending countryman on the point of a Greek quotation. The son is well known as the biographer of George Thomas, and as the author of a work on the site of Palibothra, in which he endeavours to identify it with Campānagar, a village about four miles to the west of Bhāgalpur. He was mistaken, no doubt, but the book is still worth reading. His principal point was that there was a river near Campānagar, called the 'Errun Bhowah,' which certainly resembled in sound, but not in size, the Greek Erano-boas. He seems to have converted Major Wilford to his opinion, for he speaks of him as having given up the Rājmahal site in favour of the Bhāgalpur one. Referring to this, Francklin speaks with stately courtesy of Wilford, as a man "with whom to be associated, is to be associated with learning itself." But the most picturesque circumstance in Francklin's life was a tour which he made in Persia in 1786, when he was an Ensign and only three-and-twenty years of age. On this occasion he lived for about six months in Shirāz as a member of a Persian family. He became a Major in 1810, and a Lieut.-Colonel in 1814. For seven years he was Regulating Officer at Bhāgalpur, and in that capacity had, I believe, to do with the invalided sepoy who were at that time settled in the Jungle Tarāi. We are told that he himself was invalided in 1815, but Bishop Heber, who met him at Bhāgalpur in 1824, describes him as being then inspecting field-officer of Bhāgalpur. The Bishop describes him as being a very agreeable and communicative old man, and as the possessor of curious and interesting collections. Francklin retired from service in 1825, and died in April 1839, at the age of 76. At the time of his death he was Librarian to the Royal Asiatic Society. From a casual reference in his book on Palibothra<sup>1</sup> we learn that he was married, and that his wife accompanied him on a visit to Dēōgarh. There is an account of him in the National Dictionary of Biography; but the author of it has not always verified his references, and has made some mistakes: as for example, when he speaks of Francklin's having lived *eight* months with a Persian family in Shirāz.

The report on Gauṛ is entitled "Journal of a Route from Rājmahal

<sup>1</sup> The 'Muhudipur' of Pemberton's Map, and the 'Mahdipur' of Cunningham.

to Gaur, A. D. 1810: by Major William Francklin, Regulating Officer at Bhágalpur." The first entry is "11th December, 1810.—Left Rájmahál and in four marches reached the village of Aurangábád, the south-eastern boundary of the Bhágalpur district." From Aurangábád (now in the Jangipur Subdivision of Murshidábád), he went to Sutī, crossed the Bhāgīrathī at a ford into the Cossimbāzār island, then crossed the Ganges to Sibganj, and proceeded towards Mōdhīpur. "After winding through the forest we passed the village of Chandy, where are erected some indigo works belonging to Mr. Ellerton, of Goamalty, pleasantly situated in the woods and near the river. At 9-30 A. M., encamped at the village of Mōdhīpur; at about 20 yards from this village the Ganges branches out to the southward, and you enter the Bhāgīrathī river, on which is situated the city of Gaur. This river must not be confounded with that which bounds the Cossimbazar island to the N.-W., bearing the same name, distance 9 miles. (See the map.)"

The report is not a long one, for it is contained in a thin folio of about eighty pages. The second part of it is occupied by an account of Paṇḍuā and a historical memorandum. From the dates in the Paṇḍuā Journal it would appear that the '11th December, 1810,' of the first entry of the Gaur Journal, is a clerical error for "11th November."

The Journal before noticing the buildings in detail gives the following general description of Gaur:—

"What remains of the ancient city of Gaur is situated on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī river, enclosed in deep and thick jungles. The river runs east and west, and formerly skirted the walls of the royal palace, though it has in the course of time considerably receded.

It is situated 100 miles east-by-south of Bhagalpore, 28 miles S. E. from Rajmahal, and 11 miles distant from Maldah. You enter from the eastward through the Katwali Gate. The extent of the city of Gaur, without including the suburbs, is about ten miles in length, but in no place is it broader than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  or 3 miles. It is surrounded on all sides by a stupendous mound of earth, 250 ft. wide at the base, and from 30 to 40 ft. high; the top of this embankment is now planted with rows of lofty trees. This embankment was no doubt intended to protect the city, which is situated on low ground, from the destruction occasioned by the overflowing of the rivers, at the season of the periodical rains. Two grand roads led through the whole of the city, raised with earth and paved with brick, commencing at the Katwali Gate and terminating at the N.-W. entrance. Within this extent the remains of bridges which have been cut (?) over the low grounds, are still visible. Over every part of this city large tanks have been formed, with innumerable drains and ditches, to carry off the water, the earth of which, being thrown up, has elevated the ground considerably from the level country. The ground about Gaur is everywhere scattered over with bricks, which are turned up, and mix with the soil, which is very rich, and in those parts that

are cultivated, highly productive. About half a mile from the Katwali Gate is a bridge regularly paved with brick, with stones underneath. It has a gentle ascent and descent, and appears to be of great antiquity. At the western extremity are two stone pillars having Sanscrit inscriptions.<sup>1</sup> On each side of the road leading to the royal palace are several mosques built in the Pathan style of architecture, like those to be seen at Delhi. They are entirely round, and have arched windows of brick. In the neighbourhood are many tanks, and the cultivation is considerable and the appearance of the surrounding scenery picturesque. Nearly opposite the fort, in which is situated the royal palace, is a lofty column of Pathan architecture. It is circular in form, has several windows, and is surrounded at the top by a cupola.

“This column was built by Firoz Shah, one of the Pathan princes of Gaur, and in the style of its architecture resembles the columns built by Firoz Shah which are still to be seen at Allahabad and Delhi.”

Then follows the description of the Minār, which Mr. Grote has extracted. (p. 28, l. c.) It may be noted that Francklin prefixes to the fragmentary inscription, obtained<sup>2</sup> by him at Goamalty, these words in Persian :—

نقل کتابه دروازه مناره فیروز شاه من احاطه قلعه گور

That is, “Copy of the inscription on the door of the Minār of Fīrōz Shāh, in the Fort of Gaur.”

These words show that the tradition that the Minār was built by Fīrōz Shāh existed before Francklin's time. We know too that it was in existence when the *Riyāzu-s-salāṭīn* was written, *i.e.*, about 1787. See Persian text of that work, p. 126. In his note, p. 28 of Ravenshaw's Gaur, Mr. Grote refers to Fīrōz Shāh as having only reigned from 893 to 895, but the inscription from the Murshidābād district, of which a translation appears in the *Proceedings* of our Society for February 1893, p. 55, shows that Fīrōz Shāh's reign extended to at least the beginning of 896 (2, Muḥaram). Mr. Blochmann also states that Fīrōz Shāh reigned till 1491, or 896, *vide* historical note in Ravenshaw's Gaur, p. 100. The coin, however, to which Mr. Grote refers, as fixing the chronology of Fīrōz Shāh II, only gives the date 893, and Blochmann prefers 895 for the last year of his reign. At p. 56, *l. c.*, Mr. Grote gives an inscription stated by Francklin to belong to the Golden Mosque at Paṇḍuā. The quotation is correct, and in Francklin's journal, p. 25, the inscription is preceded

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham does not notice these inscriptions.

<sup>2</sup> Francklin uses the word ‘found,’ but this merely means, that he saw it there after it had been removed to the factory by Mr. Ellerton or Mr. Creighton. The Chānd Darwāzā inscription was also ‘found’ at Goamalty. Ravenshaw, p. 18, note.

by Persian words indicating that it is a copy of an inscription from the Golden Mosque of Paṇḍuā. But I think that Francklin or the Munshī must have made some mistake. An inscription bearing the date 885, and referring to Yūsuf Shāh, can have nothing to do with the Paṇḍuā mosque, and in fact no such inscription now appears there. Two inscriptions belonging to this mosque are given in Ravenshaw, p. 56, and their dates are 990 and 993, *i. e.*, more than a hundred years after the date of Francklin's inscription. The inscription, too, comes into Francklin's Journal at an odd place, if it belongs to Paṇḍuā, for it occurs in his account of Gaur, and not in the subsequent account of Paṇḍuā. After describing the Golden Mosque at Gaur (pp. 4 and 15 of Ravenshaw's Gaur), and giving its inscription, which is of the year 932, or 1526 A. D., Francklin proceeds as follows (p. 25 of Journal): "There is another Golden Mosque at the village of Chandy, near the south-eastern entrance of the city, and a third at Purrooah once the capital of the kings of Bengal. They are of similar architecture, but those of Chandy and Purrooah are much smaller in size to the one above described." "The following inscription appears in front of the Golden Mosque at Purrooah." He then gives the inscription and translation, which Mr. Grote has quoted at p. 56, *l. c.*

On referring to the map in Creighton's Gaur it appears that the Chandy Golden Mosque must be the small golden mosque described at p. 38 of Ravenshaw's Gaur. Francklin's inscription then cannot belong to it, for the small golden mosque was erected in the reign of Ḥusain Shāh, *i. e.*, in the early part of the 10th century, A. H. Nor can it, as we have just seen, belong to the Paṇḍuā golden mosque. Most probably the inscription belonged to the Çāntipārā mosque at Gaur. We have it from Creighton (quoted by Mr. Grote, p. 30, *l. c.*), that an inscription was found near the Çāntipārā mosque which gave the date of Francklin's inscription, *viz.*, 885. Mr. Grote conjectures that the inscription referred to by Creighton is that now at the Qadam Rasūl mosque, and published at p. 22 of Ravenshaw's book. But Mr. Ravenshaw says that this inscription is supposed to have belonged to a mosque not far distant, and now in entire ruins. The latter part of this description, at least, does not apply to the Çāntipārā mosque, *vide* Ravenshaw, p. 30. It is also mentioned there that an inscription said to have been taken from the Çāntipārā mosque contains the name of Yūsuf Shāh. This is just what Francklin's inscription does. Of course the inscription alluded to by Ravenshaw at p. 30, may be that given by him at p. 22; but if so, one would have expected at the latter passage an express mention of Çāntipārā. As Mr. Grote has remarked, Francklin nowhere mentions the Çāntipārā mosque by that name, and it is probable

enough that the mosque called by him the "Mahajan Talah Mosque" is really the Çāntipārā one.

Immediately after giving the inscription said by him to belong to the Golden Mosque of Paṇḍuā, Francklin proceeds as follows:—

"A large space of ground formerly constituted the area, or outer court of this mosque, which is scarcely visible from the excessive high and thick jungle that encompasses the whole of the building. There are, however, evident marks of adjoining buildings displayed in a mass of ruins and rubbish; these were most probably the kitchen and other offices, for the use of the attendants belonging to the mosque, and places for the Maulavies, or readers of the Koran, the Muazzins, or criers to prayers, and other persons attached to the institution.

"Being situated on the summit of a pretty steep ascent, were the surrounding jungle cleared away, it would command a delightful prospect of the adjacent country. The column of Fīrōz Shāh being in sight, the remains of the royal palace, the numerous tanks in the neighbourhood."

If this description relates, as grammatically it should, to the mosque of which he has just given the inscription, it is clear that the word 'Paṇḍuā' must be a mistake, for the Minār and the tanks of Gaur cannot be visible from Paṇḍuā. But I am not sure if Francklin, after giving the inscription, does not revert to the Golden Mosque of Gaur. There are parts of the description just quoted which might apply to the ruins of the Madrasah, as described at p. 34 of Ravenshaw. The Madrasah is marked in Pemberton's Survey-Map of 1847-49, of which there is an enlargement in Ravenshaw, on the north bank of the smaller Sagar tank. On the west of the tank there is a mosque marked at a place called "Soonar Gong." Possibly this is the golden mosque from which Francklin got the inscription. The village of Chandy, or Chāndnī, mentioned by Francklin, is not marked in the enlargement of Pemberton. Creighton's map, however, shows it. It was on the Pagla, and was once the factory of Mr. William Grant, the friend of Creighton.

Francklin speaks of the tomb of Ḥusain Shāh as being still in existence, and calls it the "Bādshāh-kī-qabr." His description is quoted by Mr. Grote, p. 24 *l. c.*, in a note to the photograph of Fath Khān's tomb. But it is evident from the anonymous\* account in Glazier's report on Rangpur, Appendix A., p. 107, that the tomb had been despoiled many years before Francklin's visit, and that he was probably in error

\* From Creighton's account of Orme's remarks, especially those about the block lying by the river, it seems probable that the Rangpur MS. is a copy of Orme's remarks. The question might be set at rest by examining the Orme papers, which fill part of a press in the India Office Library.

in speaking of the bodies of Ḥusain Shāh and his family as still lying there. The following is the account given in Glazier:—

“The Maqbara is a burying-place, built of bricks, the gates and walls of which are very curiously ornamented with figures and flowers impressed in the bricks when they are burned and . . . . . similar to the Dutch tiles in Europe, and which to this day appear to have received very little detriment from time or weather. From this place Captain Adams removed the two finest tombs in the city, said to contain two kings, named Husain Shāh and Nasrat Shāh. What became of the most principal parts of these tombs, I cannot learn, but I believe they are in Calcutta, and there are now by the waterside five pieces of black marble polished on two sides, twelve feet in length, two feet high, and two feet thick, which were part of them.”

Probably it is one of these pieces which is described at p. 3 of Ravenshaw's *Gaur*, where we are told that, “On the road-side, between the palace and the Bhāgīrathī river, there now lies, split in twain, a vast block of hornblende, which, having been carried thus far, has been dropped and left, as broken, on the highway, to bear its testimony against the spoilers.”

From a note to the translation of the *Siyaru-l-muta'akhirin*, p. 184, we learn that Captain Adams's spoliation took place about 1766, and that when the royal tomb was opened by him, an ūd-dān (عوددان), or censer, was found at the foot of the body.

Francklin's description of the palace follows immediately after that of Ḥusain Shāh's tomb. The material portion of it, including the inscription of Barbak Shāh, has been given by Mr. Grote, *l. c.*, pp. 18, 19.

Francklin visited Mr. Ellerton at Goamalty, and notices the remains there of “a very handsome mosque built of stone and brick; the only minaret remaining has a fanciful appearance. The remains of marble columns in the outside of the verandah of the building are still to be seen.”

Although Mr. Grote's extracts have been carefully made, and have perhaps made the publication of Francklin's journal unnecessary, there is an Appendix to the latter which deserves notice. It contains a Chronological Table of the Muḥammadan rulers of Gaur, and a Historical Memorandum regarding them. The interest of the memorandum consists in the fact that it is, word for word, the same as that given by Buchanan, and which is printed in Montgomery Martin's *Eastern India*, Vol. II, 616–21. Even the spelling of the proper names is the same. For instance, in both, the name of the Hindū usurper, commonly called Rājā Kāns, appears as Gones, and he is described in both as Hākim of Dynwaj, with the parenthetical suggestion that he was perhaps a petty Hindū

chief of Dinājpur. So far as I can see, the only difference between Francklin and Buchanan is that Francklin ends with the word "province," whereas Buchanan adds the words, "as I shall afterwards have occasion to show." The Chronological Table too, given by Francklin, is, word for word, the same as that given in Appendix N., p. 28, of the 2nd Vol. of *Eastern India*. Even the heading and the memorandum at the foot are the same. The very mistakes are the same in both. For instance, in both, the Hindū king is called Rae Lukhmeesey, and the duration of his reign is given as eight years, though in the column of dates he is said to have reigned from 510–590, H. S. In Francklin's table the *eight* has been corrected into *eighty*, but this has been done in pencil, and apparently at some subsequent time. In order to clear the matter up I have referred to the Buchanan MSS. The account of the Muḥammadan rulers of Gaur is to be found there in the Dinājpur volume, I, pp. 72–83. It is headed, "Part 2nd. Muḥammadan Government," and is word for word as in Montgomery Martin. There is no reference to Buchanan having borrowed it from Francklin or from any one else. The Chronological Table is in the 2nd volume of the Dinājpur MSS., and is in the Appendix, pp. 2–10. It, too, is word for word the same as Francklin, except such insignificant changes, as putting the word "Memorandum" for Francklin's phrase "Conclusive remark." There is no reference to its having been obtained from Francklin, but there can be no doubt of the fact, for at the end of the Memorandum (in the Buchanan MS.) we have the words "True Copy," and the initials "W. F." in Francklin's own handwriting. It is clear then that Buchanan got the table from Francklin, and I have no doubt that he got the descriptive account also. But I do not suspect Buchanan of plagiarism. He was an honest man, and a friend of Francklin. They must have explored Gaur at about the same time, though I do not think that they visited it together; for in a note to his journal, Francklin remarks that after his return he was informed by his friend Dr. Francis Buchanan, that what he called 'black marble' was in reality hornblende. It is very likely that the circumstance of their being engaged in the same line of enquiry has led to the appearance of Francklin's papers in the Buchanan MS. Francklin tells us at the end of Section I, of his account of Gaur, that the historical memorandum "is translated from some MSS. materials procured through the kindness of Mr. Ellerton, of the factory at Goamalty, a gentleman who unites business with science and a love of the arts, and whose polite hospitality to us during our stay at his mansion entitles him to every consideration and thanks."

To the Table is appended, what is called, a "Conclusive remark," and which, with unimportant verbal differences, is the same as Buchanan's "Memorandum."



Francklin attests his Historical Memorandum as being a "True translation," but it is evident that it is not merely a translation from the Persian, but contains comments of his own, or of Mr. Ellerton's. The opening paragraph refers to "A manuscript account which I procured at Pandua;" but I do not feel sure who the *I* is. Ellerton lived at Goamalty in Gaur, but perhaps it was he who procured the MS. at Paṇḍuā. Or the *I* may refer to the Persian Munshī.<sup>1</sup>

Francklin also writes the words "True translation" at the end of his Chronological Table, though that is a compilation from various authorities, and is described by him, and also in Buchanan's *Eastern India*, II, App. N., p. 28, as "Selected from native historians." It may be however, that Ellerton's Munshī drew up the Table and that Francklin only translated it.

The point of the origin of the Historical Memorandum and of the Chronological Table is an interesting one, and I am unable to clear it up entirely. It is something to be able to trace it back to Gaur and to Mr. Ellerton. What I imagine to have occurred is that Ellerton got the Persian materials and made them over to Francklin, that Francklin translated them, and gave copies to his friends Ellerton and Buchanan, and that the latter by an oversight failed to note from whom he had received them. Though the Memorandum agrees pretty closely with the *Riyāzu-s-salātīn*, it differs from it about Sultān Ibrāhīm, or Ibrāhīm Shāh. The *Riyāz* makes him the Sultān of Jaunpur, but the Memorandum describes him as the grandfather of Ḥusain Shāh, and as having been put to death by Jalālu-d-dīn.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Francklin was an accomplished Persian scholar, but Buchanan was not, and so could not have made any direct use of a Persian MS.

<sup>2</sup> It may be noted for the benefit of future inquirers, that at the beginning of the Dinājpur Volume I, of the Buchanan MSS., pp. 5-8, eight Arabic inscriptions from Paṇḍuā are given, including that on the Adīna Mosque, which gives the inexplicable date 707. The inscriptions are, I think, all known ones, and have been already published, but it may be worth while to examine transcripts which are now some 90 years old.